

VZCZCXYZ0007
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTV #1119/01 1080914
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 180914Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0571
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEADWD/DA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 1988
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 8727
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 1939
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 2792
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 1982
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 9826
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 2724
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 9627
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0103
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 6709
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 4106
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 9006
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 3201
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 5128
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 6548
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 001119

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XXXX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

Mideast

Key stories in the media:

Ha'aretz (internet) this morning cited Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as saying that the U.S. is considering a regional summit with Saudi involvement. Olmert was quoted as saying that the U.S. is thinking

of a summit that would include: the Quartet members (the US, EU, UN and Russia) as well as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Israel, the P.A. and Saudi Arabia. Olmert added that there is a possibility that a delegation of the Arab League will come to Israel following the Arab foreign ministers meeting Tuesday in Cairo.

All media reported that Secretary of States Condoleezza Rice met Palestinian Minister of Finance Salam Fayad in Washington on Tuesday. Talking to the press after their meeting Fayad said they talked about ways to ease Palestinians' economic problems.

All media reported that Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas has reached an agreement with the Islamic Jihad movement whereby the organization will cease Qassam rocket firing. Ha'aretz quoted IDF sources as confirming that there has been a sharp drop in rocket fire as a result of the agreement.

Leading media reported that US Secretary of Defense is scheduled to arrive in Israel on Wednesday. Maariv writes that Gates' visit symbolizes the final end of the crisis between the Israeli and the American security establishments. Maariv adds that the aim of the visit is to prepare U.S.'s allies in the Middle East towards the possibility that the U.S. would withdraw from Iraq. The newspaper said that Iran will be one of the main topics Secretary Gates is expected to raise.

The Jerusalem Post quoted sources in the Arab League on the eve of a meeting of Arab foreign ministers as saying that the ministers are not going to discuss direct negotiations with Israel but only ways of marketing the Arab peace plan to the world.

Leading media reported that the Shin Bet (Israel Security Services) said on Tuesday that Iran has been making efforts to recruit Israelis who are visiting relatives in Iran to spy in Israel for Iran; the media noted that the Shin Bet caught one Israeli who agreed to do it. Following these attempts the Shin Bet believes that it is imperative that legislation is passed defining Iran as an enemy country in order to prevent Israelis from traveling there.

All media cited reports that Egypt has arrested and indicted three people for spying for Israel. Two of the three are foreign nationals -- from Japan and Ireland -- and one is Egyptian.

Leading media cited Syrian President Bashar Assad as saying in an interview to a Lebanese paper that Syria is preparing for a potential war with Israel and that it is improving its defensive capabilities.

All media reported that Israeli President Moshe Katzav's period of incapacity is ending next week and that he intends to extend it.

All media cited estimations of senior government officials that Minister of Finance Avraham Hirshzon will resign in the near future since if he doesn't do it himself, the Attorney General Menachem Mazuz will force him to do so.

Mideast:

Summary:

Veteran columnist Yosef Harif wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv: "The ball is now in the Arab countries' hands. In order for their declarations to be executed and fruitful they must acknowledge the fact that true peace means mutual concessions. Without such an acknowledgment the Israeli-Arab conflict might remain unsolved."

Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: "The Saudis are being given license to speak with forked tongues. They promised the US to discontinue their embargo against Israel, a precondition for entry to the World Trade Organization.... But its commitment was mere lip-service. Saudi policy did not change.... But the Saudi disingenuity now comes as Riyadh presents itself as the new would-be patron of regional peace."

Block Quotes:

II. "No Preconditions"

Veteran columnist Yosef Harif wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (4/18): "Now we are witnessing a serious turnabout when most of Arab countries, influenced by Saudi Arabia, ... have expressed their willingness to negotiate peace and normalization with Israel. But it seems that the wished-for peace is not close. This is because the Arabs' inflexible demands to open a dialogue with Israel with three preconditions: Israel withdrawing to the 1967 borders, the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital and the implementation of the right of return to Palestinian refugees.... The only chance to promote peace is with no preconditioned negotiations.... If there is no change, the Arab initiative ... shall not succeed since Israel cannot give up defendable borders so it will not agree to the 1967 borders and the return of refugees because that means the extinction of the Jewish state.... The ball is now in the Arab countries' hands. In order for their declarations to be executed and fruitful they must acknowledge the fact that true peace means mutual concessions. Without such an acknowledgment the Israeli-Arab conflict might remain unsolved."

II. "Saudi Hypocrisy"

Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (4/18): "Contrary to its solemn undertakings, Saudi Arabia has not dropped its anti-Israel trade boycott.... This travesty has continued for nearly a year and a half. Worse yet, it is no darkly concealed secret. The Saudi deception is quite overt, yet no government had

SIPDIS

seen fit to take the world's largest oil exporter to task for fear of offending it. The Saudis are being given license to speak with forked tongues. They promised the US to discontinue their embargo against Israel, a precondition for entry to the World Trade Organization.... But its commitment was mere lip-service. Saudi policy did not change.... But the Saudi disingenuity now comes as Riyadh presents itself as the new would-be patron of regional peace.

It claims to want to serve as the driving force in forging a viable solution to the decades-old conflict between the Arab world and Israel.... The notorious old Arab boycott of the Jewish state -- which, incidentally, has failed to prevent or even retard Israel's economic success -- is fundamentally inconsistent with aspirations to coexistence. Surely, if the Saudis wish to be taken seriously as advocates of progress, they must prove their sincerity on an issue that is most patently under their own control. Failure to do so can only reinforce those Israeli skeptics who warn that the Saudis are merely out to further yesteryear's inimical Arab agenda via new tactics. "

JONES